THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (DR. M.S. GILL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. After obtaining the necessary regulatory clearances, the work on the 13 Competition venues and most of the Training venues has commenced and is continuing apace. Time Lines, against monitorable parameters are being monitored, on a web-based monitoring system developed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The projects are expected to be completed in time for the Commonwealth Games.

Country's performance in Olympic Games

†1239. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for India always lagging behind in winning gold, silver and bronze medals;

(b) whether Government has made any investigation ever in this regard;

(c) if so, the reasons for Government not getting skilled players inspite of such a large population;

(d) whether Government takes the sufficient precaution regarding the selection of players;

(e) if so, the number of complaints that Government receives every year in this regard, in what manner these complaints are resolved; and

(f) the efforts being made to improve our performance in ensuing Olympic Games?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (DR. M.S. GILL): (a) to (c) Overall performance of the country in major sporting events has not been optimal primarily due to the narrow base of talent pool that can be tapped to prepare medal prospects. This in turn is mainly on account of the inadequacy of the sports infrastructure especially at the grassroots level and the poor access to competitive sports. The Government is trying to address this at two levels. As a long term measure, efforts are being made to broad base sports at the grassroots levels under the recently launched Panchayat Yuva Krida aur Khel Abhiyan (PYKKA). PYKKA aims to cover all the panchayats in the country in a phased manner over a period of 10 years. Besides, promoting mass participation, this Scheme is also expected to expand the talent pool by tapping the hitherto largely unexploited rural sports talent.

(d) The selection of national team for participation in international events is primarily responsibility of the National Sports Federations (NSFs) concerned. However, the Government appoints observers to oversee the selection process with a view to ensuring that the selection process is fair and transparent. Assistance is released only after ensuring that the selection has been done in a fair manner.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) Sometimes the Government does receive complaints regarding improper selection and these are normally resolved in consultation with Government observers before clearing the teams.

(f) Preparations for winning more medals in all major international events, including the ensuing Olympics, is an on-going process and is based on the Long Term Development Plans (LTDP) prepared by the NSFs. The Government has recently sanctioned Rupees 678 crores under the Scheme of preparation of Indian teams for Commonwealth Games 2010. Further, to address the specific coaching/training requirements of identified madal prospects, individual sportspersons are also being assisted directly by the Ministry for purchase of equipment, provision of scientific support and training and participation within country and abroad, under the 'Scheme relating to Talent Search & Training' and through the 'National Sports Development Fund'.

Apart from this, the Government provides assistance to the NSFs for various activities such as holding national/international sports events in India, the participation of Indian sportspersons/ teams in international sports events abroad, the engagement of national and international coaches and the procurement of equipment and consumables.

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WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR WEDNESDAY THE 10TH DECEMBER, 2008#

Problems faced by handloom weavers

*121. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted any survey recently to find out the problems being faced by the weavers;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government has made any effort to improve their lot by improving handloom clusters, ensuring adequate supplies of yarn to weavers and extending health insurance cover for them; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, the 10th December, 2008 was adjourned as a mark of respect to the memory of former Prime Minister of India, Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh. Answers to questions put down in the list for that day were laid on the table of the House on Thursday, the 11th December, 2008.